



2020 ANNUAL REPORT



university of victoria
students' society

Run by students, for students.



CAMPAIGNS AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Juliet Watts

Director of Campaigns & Community Relations

This year, the Campaigns and Community Relations portfolio achieved our major goal of increasing member engagement! We ran exciting campaigns and provided a variety of opportunities to get involved in creating meaningful change. We prioritized the campaigns of sustainability, preventing sexualized violence, and increasing mental health resources, affordable education, and student voter turnout in the 2019 federal election. We were successful in achieving some of our goals in each of these areas, while also conducting advocacy in the areas of affordable housing and harm reduction.

These campaigns are ongoing and changing year to year, and every Director and member of the portfolio brings their own perspectives to the campaigns, but the issue of representing such diverse student needs will always be a challenge and opportunity. We found that working collaboratively and delegating tasks assisted in increasing capacity, and the number of diverse perspectives we were able to represent.

Portfolio Directors at Large:

Jelayna Van Dyke **and** Caleb Burd

RESULTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN:

STRATEGIC ACHIEVEMENTS:

Increasing member engagement, student-led campaigns and leadership development:

We achieved our major strategic goal of increasing member engagement within the campaigns portfolio! Divest UVic working groups and events achieved consistently high attendance. Campaigns Committees members' consistent attendance provided meaningful guidance, approval, and feedback on initiatives. We leaders as we worked one-on-one with several committed members of Divest to increase the capacity of the campaign.

Expanded Director at Large (DAL) involvement:

Regular communication and relationship maintenance kept the dynamic of our portfolio positive and productive. We also successfully achieved the addition of honorariums for DALs! Caleb established and chaired the **EcoFoot** working group, and Jelayna represented students on many University committees and led the re-brand of the **Let's Get Consensual** campaign.

Collaboration with community groups:

Throughout the term we developed several community partnerships to collaborate and run events during Divestfest, Climate Strikes,

Indigenous solidarity actions, harm reduction events and many others. It was a pleasure to work with these groups and build the community relations aspect of the portfolio.

Two-track advocacy strategy:

We were successful in applying pressure, providing information and building momentum by holding biweekly lobby meetings with UVic representatives and facilitating demonstrations of student support for Divestment. Despite a disappointing result, this tactic was effective in applying respectful pressure.

Utilized proximity to BC Legislature:

We attended the Alliance of BC Students' (ABCS) Lobby Days and lobbied 67 MLAs to implement needs-based grants for low-and middle-income students. Following these meetings, we were delighted to see the announcement of need based grants in the provincial budget!

We were proud to provide resources to the Indigenous Youth for Wet'suwet'en solidarity actions.

CAMPAIGNS & COMMUNITY RELATIONS

PROGRESS ON PRIORITIES:

1. Sustainability

- a. Divest UVic made great progress in building a student-movement through collective action, but were disappointed by UVic's greenwashing policy on responsible investment.

2. Preventing sexualized violence

- a. In collaboration with the Anti Violence Project and the UVSS Art Director, we re-branded Let's Get Consensual and are developing materials to assist other BC campuses run the campaign and become facilitators of consent training on their campuses.
- b. During our annual Sexualized Violence Awareness Week, we conducted outreach with our on-campus partners and hosted a EmPOWERment burlesque show!
- c. We lobbied UVic to implement mandatory consent training during the fall student orientation. In September, in-person respect and consent training sessions were offered to all incoming UVic Residences on eight different occasions, but attendance was not mandatory. We are optimistic that next year will be the first fall residence orientation that includes mandatory consent training.

3. Increasing mental health resources

- a. We advocated for increased mental health funding from the province. Heir 24/7 support service isn't going to fully serve the needs of UVic students, so we advocated for a UVic-specific line and helped share the cost with the Office of Student Life.
- b. Wellness Week 2020 saw several successful events, including our "Know Your Drugs" event, which focused on the intersection of harm reduction and mental wellbeing, and a keynote event with Jordan Tootoo.
- c. We worked with our graphics team and the Office of Student Life to release a beautiful UVic Resource Map detailing where students can find a wide range of mental health and wellness resources on campus.

4. Affordable education

- a. We successfully advocated for needs based grants! 40,000 low-and middle-income students in BC now have access to annual, up-front, non-repayable grants.
- b. Through meeting with MPs and in collaboration with other student societies, we advocated to bring back the textbook tax rebate.

5. Increasing student voter turnout in the 2019 federal election

- a. We collaborated with the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) to use their pledge software and campaign materials to get out the student vote.
- b. We unfortunately did not meet our pledge targets, but had high attendance at informational events, including at our all-candidates forum, leaders debate, and election night viewing parties.
- c. Our social media engagement was successful as we answered questions about on-campus voting and the 2019 federal election.



**Divest
UVic**

Lgc
**LET'S GET
CONSENSUAL**



UVSS
ECOFOOT

EVENTS



**Shay Lynn
Sampson**
Director of Events

As the 2019-2020 board term comes to a close, the Events portfolio has a lot to look back on and be proud of. As with any portfolio, the year was full of successes and challenges, which will leave the incoming director with a good foundation to grow the portfolio.

Regretfully, Shay Lynn Sampson had to step down from the position in February to focus on pressing issues outside of the portfolio. However, due to her hard work, she left the Events portfolio on track to meet several objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan. The Interim Director of Events, Kai Richins, has been able to build on Sampson's work with five events planned for the final two months that fall within the purview of the goals set by the original director.

Campus Kick Off (CKO) 2019 was an overall success. This three-day event saw the continuation of popular events, such as the Pancake Breakfast, the Welcome Back DJ Party, Bands on the Roof, and Movie in the Quad.

This year, Sampson also organized an Advocacy Fair in the SUB on the final Friday that provided space for the

Advocacy and Affiliated Groups to conduct outreach during the building's busiest time of the year. Unfortunately, the cancellation of the Back in Black Light Party due to reasons beyond the portfolio's control meant that CKO went without an all-ages party this year.

For the remainder of the year, the portfolio worked on continuing successful annual UVSS events, such as Puppy De-Stress (now a collaborative effort with the Peer Support Centre) and the ferry shuttle services during both the November and February Reading Breaks.

The portfolio has also focused on three main targets as outlined in the major goal section of the Strategic plan: advocacy, accessibility, and sustainability. This was achieved by working with different campus organizations and ensuring diversity and accessibility in the events offered.

Portfolio Directors at Large:

Dalal Tubeishat **and** Olivia Reid-Friesen

RESULTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN:

SOME OF THESE EFFORTS INCLUDE:

- A collaborative effort with the Campaigns portfolio to run a Know Your Rights: Direct Action Workshop and an Indigenous Law panel during Divest Fest;
- Working with the Society for Students with a Disability (SSD) to run an Accessibility Town Hall;
- A collaborative effort with the International Student Relations Committee to host a Spring Celebration and informational session for International students;
- A balance between all-ages and 19+ events to ensure that UVSS events are accessible to a wide student audience. This includes two Open Mic Nights.

EVENTS

RESULTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN (cont.):

The portfolio also began the first stages in the development of an event planning and tracking system to address the first challenge identified in the strategic plan. While there is still work to be done in terms of tracking event metrics,

the new Event Planning Template that was developed during this board term has set a baseline from which event success can be measured moving forward.





FINANCE & OPERATIONS

Dakota McGovern

Director of Finance & Operations

In the 2019-2020 Board term, the Finance and Operations Portfolio's major priority has been bringing student voices to the forefront of all aspects of the UVSS's finances, operations, services, marketing, and strategic planning. This year, the Director of Finance and Operations emphasized increasing financial transparency to further breakdown barriers that prevent members at large from getting involved in the decision making processes of the UVSS.

Perhaps most importantly of all, over the Board term, the UVSS took proactive steps to increase the revenue within our nine student-run businesses, particularly in the food and beverage operations. By doing so, the relationship between department managers and the Board has been strengthened, the UVSS has more financial resources to maintain relevance within the lives of our members, and the increased traffic within the Student Union Building led to more students interacting with our services.

At the UVSS Annual General Meeting (AGM), over 109 students voted to approve the UVSS's comprehensive financial plan by ratifying the draft budget. The critical assumption has been that successful financial management is not just a requirement of running a not-for-profit; it is integral to providing student services.

The Finance and Operations Portfolio has used the finances of the society to impact the lives of students directly. The Board this year has invested more in Grants and Donations than any Board in the last 17 years, has revitalized the Environmental Responsibility Fund, and has created a new line-item in the budget for International Student advocacy. To learn more about society finances, visit the UVSS website or contact the Director of Finance directly. The society has and always will be run by students, for students – we value your input.

Portfolio Directors at Large:

Jinx Stromquist and Zyanaya Fox

RESULTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN:

1. We rolled out a new social enterprise marketing campaign (complete)

- a. At the AGM, the Board presented a cost comparison between the University and the UVSS to showcase our affordable products.
- b. The Board worked alongside Department Managers to develop more materials such as handbills, posters, tent-cards, billboards, web pages that communicate our mandate to members.

2. We improved marketing by further developing the ambiance within the Student Union Building (complete)

- a. The Board showcased more student artwork through setting up a mural in Zap Copy in January and partnering with the Visual Arts Student Association to display their artwork in April.

- b. The Grill's hours were extended by two hours on weekdays.
- c. The EcoFoot working group developed the free Mug Bank outside of Munchie Bar in early September by using the recently revived Environmental Responsibility Fund.
- d. The UVSS conducted its first sustainability audit since 2013, and has scheduled capital improvements to reflect the audit's recommendations.
- e. Brought Board games into the SUB for students to play free of charge.
- f. Brought a button-maker into Zap Copy for students to use.
- g. Increased the variety of food options in the SUB, including but not limited to more vegetarian options.

FINANCE & OPERATIONS

RESULTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN (cont.):

3. We fostered an effective working relationship between the UVSS Board and department managers (complete)

- a. As of February 29th, the Board has held 10 SUB Business Marketing Committee meetings and has an additional three scheduled.
- b. Alongside the General Manager and Executive Director, the UVSS Personnel Committee worked on the creation of a new Marketing and Events Coordinator position to promote Board programming and UVSS businesses to members and staff within the UVSS.

4. We increased the value of UVSS services (Partially complete)

- a. At the beginning of the year, the Finance and Operations Committee wanted to work alongside the events and campaigns portfolio and local credit unions to provide financial literacy workshops on financial management to members once per term. Unfortunately, this project did not come to fruition because our portfolio lacked the necessary capacity to do so.
- b. The Finance Portfolio worked with the General Manager and Executive Director to create new UVSS budget lines for the category of environmental responsibility.
- c. The UVSS signed a commitment with Meal Exchange to increase the amount of socially just food we provide over the next five years.

5. We increased the profitability of our nine student-run businesses

- a. This year, the UVSS has faced a variety of financial challenges, most notably through the increasing cost of labour. Until the closure of the Student Union Building due to the Covid-19 outbreak, most of our businesses were on target with the Food and Beverage Operations on track to have its best year since 2014.
- b. In spite of Starbucks coming to campus, Munchie Bar performed exceptionally well while the SUB remained open.

6. We took tangible steps to increase financial transparency

- a. After the UVSS 2019-2020 budget was approved at our AGM, we published five social media posts to break it down for members.
- b. At the AGM, the Finance and Operations Portfolio provided a tangible presentation on how society finances work.
- c. As of February 29th, the UVSS has held 21 Finance and Operations Committee meetings.
- d. The UVSS published a guidebook online that explains UVSS Finances in February and published 5 social media breakdowns of it throughout the Board term.
- e. We have published our quarterly financial statements online.
- f. We re-integrated scorecards into the UVSS strategic plan to ensure our goals are digestible for our membership.





STUDENT AFFAIRS

Victoria Eaton
Director of Student Affairs

The Student Affairs Portfolio supports, creates, and promotes resources such as online cheque requisition submission and tools to view funding for clubs, course unions and professional development unions.

Throughout the three semesters, roughly 190 clubs ratified, 35 course unions ratified, and 5 professional development unions were active.

The portfolio also supports advocacy groups through the Advocacy Relations Committee. UVSS advocacy groups include Pride, Students of Colour Collective, the Gender Empowerment Centre, Society for Students with a Disability, and the Native Students Union.

Student Affairs bridges the gap between all of these groups and the Board of Directors.

This year, the Student Affairs portfolio has achieved and laid groundwork for creating new resources, such as the new club and course union workshop. This was a main goal at the start of the year because of the lack of knowledge about club and course union processes.

Creating a more accessible clubs and course unions days was a priority this year. This was achieved with the help of consultation from advocacy and external groups, as well as UVSS Catering and Conference services.

The student affairs portfolio has also worked towards creating open dialog between Lead Directors and the Advocacy Group reps, and tried to make the Advocacy Relations Committee meetings de-colonial by evolving away from a Robert's Rules structure towards a consent based/conversation system.

At the beginning of this board term, we identified two main challenges for clubs and course unions: **Lack of knowledge around available resources** and **policy confusion that affects these groups accessing the right resources**.

Some ways to combat these main challenges were: Promote existing resources through emails and online information, clubs and course union council, and a new clubs workshop.

This year, I added relevant information such as my office hours, room booking links, and the next meeting time into every mass email I sent to clubs and course unions. The communications team and I also worked hard to keep the website as up to date as possible. I communicated this information at every clubs and course union councils.

Portfolio Directors at Large:

Caelen Cook **and** Kolin Sutherland-Wilson

RESULTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN:

1. Create a comprehensive workshop including explanation of funding, insurance, room bookings, etc. for new (and existing) clubs with the intention that all new clubs will attend by January

We held the first club and course union information session in January 2020, where we discussed insurance, room booking, cheque reqs, and more. This helped to free up time at the initial ratification meeting and to create a dedicated time for questions. We had a good attendance considering it was a new workshop.

2. Rework clubs and course union days to create more accessibility and organization for implementation in September

This was a priority for me this year. I reworked the layout of clubs and course union days to create a space that was more welcoming and accessible for everyone. In the future I would love to see the space become more accessible for neurodiverse folks.

STUDENT AFFAIRS

RESULTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN (cont.):

3. Create more online resources for room booking and funding for clubs and course unions by December

I have encountered a lot of barriers while trying to create an online room booking system. This is a goal I did not achieve, but I will leave all my work and progress document to the next student affairs director to continue this work.

4. Update and clarify policies about funding for clubs and course unions with the help of Policy Development Committee by January

We updated policy to remove the need for club constitutions in an effort to make the process of making a new club more accessible. We have also begun working on a room booking policy and an updated funding policy for special project grants.



Native Students Union





STUDENT OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

Jonathan Granirer

Director of Outreach & University Relations

The Outreach and University Relations portfolio is responsible for chairing UVSS Board meetings, conducting outreach initiatives with our members, liaising with the University, being the primary spokesperson for the UVSS, and overseeing all policy and bylaw changes, among other things.

The UVSS uses tabling, canvassing, social media, UVSS swag, campaigns, clubs and course unions as our primary methods of student outreach.

The UVSS' mandate to serve students remains unfulfilled while we neglect building strong relationships with the members we represent. Although time-consuming, building and maintaining meaningful relationships with our members must be a top priority if the UVSS is to achieve its full potential.

Lead directors at the UVSS face heavy workloads and complete numerous daily tasks that consume a large amount of their time and energy. Because of this, conducting outreach amongst our members may feel like a secondary duty.

At the beginning of the 2019-2020 Board term, we planned to combat this issue by further involving Directors at Large in student outreach initiatives and by increasing the priority of member outreach throughout the year. By increasing outreach, we hoped that this would help us to both understand the needs of our members and empower them to become engaged in the governance, events and services of the UVSS.

Portfolio Directors at Large:

Kai Richins and Sarina de Havelyn

RESULTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN:

1. Reach quorum at the AGM and SAGM

- Quorum was met and held throughout the voting portion of the agenda and was lost only mid-way through the finance report—something that has not been achieved in years. This was the biggest success for the Outreach portfolio during the 2019-2020 Board term.
- Quorum was not met during the SAGM. This was unfortunate, but it was not a failure. The SAGM took place on the same day as a major student walk-out in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en. Many students who would have otherwise attended the SAGM (including many board members), were instead participating in an act of decolonialism. The UVSS should always prioritize decolonialism, even when it interferes with our own societal governance. Those who attended the walk-out over the SAGM were right to do so.

2. Increase non-lead Directors participation in outreach initiatives through increased incentivization

- This year's Board was successful at implementing new incentives for non-lead directors to engage with the UVSS through a \$50/month honoraria that was passed at the 2019 AGM.

- Unfortunately, the creation of honoraria was not sufficient to incentivize non-lead Directors to assist in outreach initiatives.
- The UVSS failed to dramatically increase outreach with its members due to a lack capacity in the outreach portfolio.
 - In order for this to change in years to come, future Boards need to ensure that the outreach portfolio has support from Lead Directors, non-lead Directors, and staff (such as the Member Outreach and Communications Officer).

3. Directly contribute to implementing 15 sets of cost-free course materials before May 1st, 2020

- In an effort to further align the actions of the UVSS with the needs of our members, we shifted our focus towards reducing financial barriers for students through promoting the usage of cost-free course materials, such as open-source textbooks.
- Overall, we contributed to funding nine new cost-free course materials, which are going to save students around half a million dollars per year once they are created.

STUDENT OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

RESULTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN (cont.):

3. Directly contribute to implementing 15 sets of cost-free course materials before May 1st, 2020 (Cont.)

- We failed to reach our goal of funding the creation of 15 cost-free course materials due to not having our grant proposal for the Campus OER Sustainability Grant approved. However, this grant is being offered by BC Campus and we will apply again. If our application is successful, the 2020-2021 UK UVSS Board of Directors will have \$32,250 to spend on the creation of cost-free course materials
- Additional efforts made to promote the usage of cost-free course materials at UVic included:
 - Presenting at a half dozen faculty and department meetings
 - a campaign to increase profs awareness of cost-free course materials via email
 - Working with UVic's executive to fund course materials (which yielded approximately \$10,000 of funding)
 - Working with the library to create a list of courses that are already using cost-free course materials
 - Pushing UVic towards allowing students to view which courses use cost-free course materials
 - Running a referendum to create a fee-levy to fund the creation of cost-free course materials. Despite receiving more yes votes than any other candidate or referendum (79% of voting students voted yes to this referendum), it failed to reach quorum by fewer than 150 students.

4. Increasing our social media presence

- While we do not have the metrics to compare this year's board to those of the past, we made our social media a priority this year.
- Our Graphics department worked hard to ensure that the UVSS' social media had consistent and engaging content.
- In the Fall term, the UVSS commenced live-streaming Board meetings in an effort to make our governance more transparent and accessible to our members.
 - This initiative resulted in over a dozen live-streamed board meetings.
- Individual Directors took the initiative to make posts related to the work that they were doing for students, such as pictures of UVSS representatives advocating for students in various meetings with elected officials from all levels

5. Increase UVSS influence by strengthening our relationships with University stakeholders

- In order to properly serve its members, the UVSS needs to be able to affect change in the institutions that it works with, such as UVic and all levels of government.
- The Director of Outreach and University Relations prioritized university relations by representing undergraduate students on nearly 30 university committees. Other directors sat on numerous university committees as well. The prioritization of university committees allowed for student voices to be heard in department chair search committees, SEM working groups, campus sustainability, convocation, and so much more.
 - Through this, UVSS Directors were able to build strong relationships with university stakeholders while also ensuring that students' perspectives were represented in the University's decision-making process.
 - The 2019-2020 UVSS Board benefited greatly by using our strong relationships with university stakeholders to access UVic's executive whenever we felt that students were not adequately being represented in the university's actions.
 - Future boards should capitalize on these relationships through ensuring that they are maintained and using them when they can benefit students.



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

The UVSS has nine unique business units, which are owned and operated by students, for students. Each of these business units are guided by a department manager. And a business plan that aligns with the UVSS Strategic Plan. The UVSS Strategic Plan allows the Board to incorporate

each business' initiatives and support the department managers. Strategic Plan goals and strategies support and enhance each SUB business. In addition, each business identifies their own primary issues, goals, metrics, and strategies where they need support from the Board.

THE RESULTS OF THE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SECTION IS AS FOLLOWS:

Catering & Conferences

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA STUDENTS' SOCIETY



- The Board and its services, the Food Bank and Peer Support Centre, continue to use Catering for its numerous events, including an open mic night, Lego building social event, and volunteer appreciation parties.
- Catering had a record setting revenue year.

CINECENTA



- Cinecenta partnered with Reslife to host a special screening during the first week of school, and targeted residence students through on-going postering throughout the year.
- Limited outreach was done outside the SUB this year but dates have been set for March to do outreach around campus.
- Movie in the Park was a big success and Cinecenta was prominent in the on-screen messaging before the event.

Felicitas

CAMPUS PUB



- Clubs and other student groups took part in Raise the Bar in both academic semesters, as well as other events.
- Limited outreach was done outside the SUB but Felicitas had a strong year.



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING

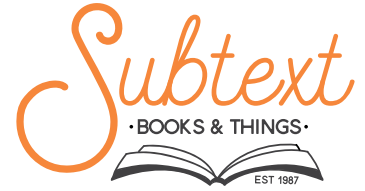
THE RESULTS OF THE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SECTION IS AS FOLLOWS (cont.):



- The Board was helpful in promoting the extended hours of the Grill through traditional means and food sampling/giveaways.
- The Director of Finance and Operations coordinated monthly tastings & promotions. Bean There and the Mug Bank initiative reduced plastic use.



- The Board supported the purchase of a new coffee bean grinder while Finnerty Express was being renovated into a Starbucks to maximize efficiency.
- The Mug Bank helped promote both Munchie Bar and sustainability.



- A new POS system was approved by this year's Board, which will be implemented this summer.
- Increased sales of retail items and student work produced good results.
- The textbook consignment process is well communicated and the increase in sales in this category is strong compared to last year.

